

The Rose Bleeds Red by Piggie50

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Summary:

Despite knowing that this was a bad idea Steve took a deep breath and went inside.

Beauty and the Beast AU

1. Chapter 1

Author's Note:

The Beauty and the Beast AU no one asked for, not even me...probably.

I really need to stop...

A long time ago there lived a king in a shining castle. He ruled over a vast and glorious kingdom with people who both loved and feared him, for while the king kept his lands safe he was unspeakably cruel and unjust.

With this terrible unkindness came about a son, a prince who, while at first as gentle and kind as princes should be, he became wretched under the hand of his vile father.

The king tortured his boy with emotional and physical violence, casting the boy into a deep and dark era of inner conflict. However, this would soon come to an end.

In time, the king died, and the young prince came to the throne.

His people held such great hope, their wishes for their new king profound and loving. Yet the young king had never recovered from his father's abuse, and despite his best attempts he was very much like his father, even if it was in different ways.

While the castle and kingdom flourished under the new king's care the hearts of the people became wilted and barren of hope, causing deep dismay to all who entered the realm.

It was in this way that the enchantress came to the castle. She had heard of the wickedness of the king, and how he treated his people and servants. She had a mind, and means, to stop it.

But, she described herself in the form of a young girl, dark eyes large and bruised, hair shorn, and wrapped in filthy clothing. She went to the castle, knocking upon the door, and being led inside by a kind plump woman.

While the two went down the halls they were stopped by none other than the king. He demanded to know who this young street urchin was, and why she had been allowed inside his gilded home.

Upon the answer of the woman the king roared in anger that the girl be shunned from the castle, and that the woman be taught a lesson about letting just anyone into these halls.

This display of unnecessary cruelty was enough for the disguised enchantress.

She shed her young skin and threw aside the filthy rags to show her proper form, eyes still dark, but beautiful hair curling from her previously barren scalp, and her feet rising above the ground with her power.

She told the king who she really was as he looked on in disbelief, and she told him that his unkindness would have to be dealt with. She punished him.

First she waved a hand and all of the people, except from she and the king, vanished from the castle, their memories of the place and the king erased.

Then, she swept forward and touched a hand to the king's forehead, sending him writhing to the ground as his limbs twisted and his hands grew into claws. He was a beastly thing now, reflecting his inner nature.

With that, she withdrew a red rose from her robes, the flower beautiful beyond belief, and looking far too delicate to endure any torture.

When the rose bleeds red, the enchantress said to the crying king, you will turn back into a human. Until then, you may think upon all that you have done, and all that you can do.

And with that, she vanished, leaving only the rose, and the degraded new beast behind.

The king was now alone in his castle, which was now a prison. His servants had disappeared, gone to live in a village where they knew nothing of kings and their troubles.

No one was any the wiser to the plight of a beast.

The day was already blooming hot as Steve stepped outside of the front door of the modest cottage that he lived in.

He took a moment to breathe in the fresh air that surrounded him before he grasped hold of the basket on his arm and started off down the worn path that led into the village.

For many years now Steve had lived here, his old life in the city forgotten with his deceased parents, his new family being the Hendersons, a kindly woman and her son, Dustin, who had taken Steve in when he had been wandering about, with no where to go.

Steve was eternally grateful to the two, and he never complained about the work they put him to on their small farm, not even when he had to wake up too early on market day. Like today.

The sun had barely risen and already the town was bustling. Merchants and craftsmen called out their wares and trades from large caravans while bakers and farmers congregated to the square to sell their products. The sweet smell of apples and sweet bread filled the air while laughing children milled about between their elders legs, accompanying dogs scurrying behind them, tripping people as they went.

Despite the early luxury in his life Steve loved the actions around him, and he found a smile settling on his face as he went about, making his rounds. Two loaves from the baker, five candles from the trader, and six apples from the farmer.

His day was going along well, and he indulged himself by stopping at the merchant's caravan, looking with happy wonder at the wonderful books that were stacked too high, the colorful fabric and small stashed of silk, the tinkering children's toys, and...oh, Steve had never seen something like that before. He stepped closer to get a closer look at the object that had caught his eye. It was a gorgeous red rose, made from delicately twisted metal and colored pieces of glass. Its twining stem led down to be cradled by a platform that had a small painted picture of a castle.

"Ah, something catch your eye, young man?" Steve looked up to find the merchant staring down at him from within his caravan, a twinkle in his eye.

"Oh," Steve stammered, backing up a bit, "Well, yes. I was just admiring the rose, it's beautiful."

The merchant grinned, "Ah, yes. The rose. A mechanical trinket I bought from a woman I met a long time back. She said that there was a story that went along with the rose..." the man squinted his eyes, as if trying to remember the tale, "Something about a rose, and how it had cursed a king. It was all very mystical, and I didn't pay much attention. I was much too eager to have the rose."

Steve furrowed his brow, "Why sell it then, if you wanted it so badly?"

The man chuckled, "Oh now, I can't be keeping my merchandise now, can I? But I'll tell you, I'll sell it to you, with a discount for showing such interest in the lovely thing."

"Lovely? Hah! It is nothing compared to Steve here!" The sudden call

came from behind Steve, and he whirled around, heart in his throat, to find Tommy standing there.

He had once been friends with Tommy. When Steve had first come to the village he had been desperate for friends, and he had found himself caught within the midst of the most persuasive boy in the town. He somehow had the adoration of the entire village (barring the Hendersons), and thought that he could do whatever he wanted. After a while this attitude deterred Steve, and he stopped his friendship with the boy, for the most part. However, during their time together Tommy had developed a sort of infatuation with Steve, one that he could not shake.

Steve thought that it was mostly because he would do whatever Tommy wanted, but the other boy claimed it was because of Steve's beauty and personality. Steve highly doubted it.

"Tommy," he said through his teeth as he smiled falsely, "I didn't see you there. How are you?"

The boy ignored the question, "This rose, do you desire it my dear Steve?"

Steve felt the urge to groan in irritation. "I was merely looking at it," he said, not wanting the boy to know his urge to have it and buy it for him. As well as being beloved, Tommy was also rich. And Steve did not want to have to accept a gift from him and be in his debt. Though, accepting gifts shouldn't have to mean that he owed the giver anything.

"If you want it, you need only tell me." Tommy said, edging closer, a startling smile on his lips as his eyes remained dark, "I would give you anything if you were only mine, sweet Steve."

The merchant made a gagging noise, and Steve had to agree. But, he said, "I'm fine. Thank you. But, I really have to go. Sorry." He wasn't sorry. At all.

He turned to the merchant, avoiding Tommy's coveting look, "Sorry to have wasted your time," he said with real remorse, "But thank you for the story, and for letting me look at the rose. It really is beautiful."

The merchant grinned at him, "You're most welcome. And thank you. The rose is very nice, but beauty is not everything. Sometimes, the true beauty lies within."

Tommy scoffed behind him, but Steve managed a smile before he turned to walk away, trying not to notice when Tommy began to follow him through the market square.

They were beyond the crowd before Tommy made a move, grabbing hold of Steve's arm and steering him into a thicket of trees, his face now void of any smiles.

"Why do you run away from me," he demanded, "You know how I want to speak to you."

Yes. Like Steve was a slave, made to do his bidding. "I'm busy," Steve said instead, his teeth clenched as he fought to hide his glare.

Tommy's lips quirked into a grin. A not very nice grin. "You know Steve," he said his name with a purr, which made Steve shudder, "If you agreed to be mine you would never be busy again. I mean, not unless you were busy with me." He leered at Steve then, and the other boy felt the urge to vomit.

"We've gone over this," Steve said, yanking his hand from the steely grip, all pretenses of a friendly air gone now, "I don't want to marry you, or whatever it is that you're proposing. It makes me sick to even think about you in that way. I never want that. Ever!"

Tommy's face turned cold and dark then, "You don't want me?" He repeated, "Need I remind you, Steve, that no one else in this town will have you. You're an outsider. One who could never be part of our world. I'm the only one that wants you. The only one that will ever want you!"

Steve nearly snarled, "Well, there is one good thing in all of this," he said slowly and smoothly, "I, at least, have one suitor. While you have no one that will ever want you!"

With that he turned on his heel ran deeper into the trees, his breath catching in his throat as Tommy's words sunk in deep and marked him forever.

Steve knew that he was mainly unwanted. Mrs. Henderson and Dustin only took him in because they felt sorry for him. They would never be concerned with Steve's coming or going. It was just life.

Even after his parents had died no one had wanted Steve. His other relatives came to their big house and took away all of their possessions, but not one of them had volunteered to take Steve and lead him to safety.

So caught up in his own depressing thoughts Steve did not notice where he was running to until his foot caught on a root and he fell, his hands scraping across the ground, and his breath escaping him upon the pain.

When he managed to pull himself up he looked around, realizing that he had no idea where he was. This part of the woods was unfamiliar,

and there were no paths or road markers anywhere in sight.

Biting the inside of his cheek Steve stood with wobbly legs and turned himself around, attempting to right his path. But the woods were tricky. Before long Steve had concluded that he was lost, and that there was no way to tell where he was.

He was tired and hungry, having skipped breakfast, and it was with a guilt conscience that he ate one of the apples from the market within the basket.

After that he marched on, trying not to panic as he watched the sun sink lower and lower across the sky, before, in the last vestiges of the light, Steve saw it.

In the middle of nowhere a spire rose from the trees, making Steve frown. But, it also made him curious. Determined, he followed the image of the spire until he found the enormous gate that also rose from the ground.

The gate was rusted, old metal with depictions of vines and leaves, a crest that had long since faded sealing the gates closed. Steve paid this no mind as he grasped onto the bars and squinted, looking deeper in the oncoming dark.

Beyond the gate was a castle, dilapidated stone carving its way into the forest, shouldering itself towards the sky. It was amazing, like something out of a story.

Steve licked his lips, wondering how he had found this place, and how no one else ever had before him, before he pushed gently on the gate, mystified when it opened creakily, and he slipped inside of it and onto the castle grounds.

The castle was more intimidating up close, but that did not stop Steve from going up to it, his eyes taking in every turret and gargoyle, every crumbling window and broken stone.

It would be impossible to enter such a place, he thought as he came to the huge front doors, which was beheld by two large empty braziers, and two stone dragons. Yet, as he pressed a hand to the doors to feel the weathered wood they opened, as if beckoning him inside.

Despite knowing that this was a bad idea Steve took a deep breath and went inside.

2. Chapter 2

Summary for the Chapter:

It was one thing to want to go into an old castle, yet it was another thing to actually do it.

Notes for the Chapter:

A wild chapter appears.

Everything was dark, and Steve could only hear his own breathing, which only served to heighten his awareness and fear.

It was one thing to want to go into an old castle, yet it was another thing to actually do it.

And somehow, this seemed like a terrible idea.

"Oh calm down," he told himself out loud, his voice echoing around the large hallway, "You're the only one here, and I bet this place hasn't been-" He cut himself off suddenly as a light came from the right, blinding him with its sudden nature.

Throat bobbing he turned towards the light to find a large lit hearth, which was large enough to place a cart into, which illuminated the hall. Now, Steve could see the dirty marble floor and the soot blackened paintings that hung on the walls, and the crest that rested above the fireplace.

Narrowing his eyes he contemplated it. A red flower, dripping blood and tears in turn while surrounded by what looked like teeth. A terrifying coat of arms meant to strike fear into the hearts of others. Steve did not recognize it.

With that out of the way he turned back to the mystery of who had lit the fire. He darted his eyes around, looking for anyone while his ears strained for the slightest noise.

"Hello?" He called, turning in a tight circle, "I'm sorry to intrude like this but I got lost in the woods and...came upon your castle. And, look, I know that it was wrong to come in here without permission but, to be honest, I didn't expect anyone to be here."

What sounded like a giggle suddenly ruffled the air, and Steve's breath hitched as he heard it, "Please," he coaxed, "I don't mean any harm. I'll leave soon, but I'd like to meet you. I'd like to know what this place is."

There was not another sound.

Trembling, Steve swallowed roughly and turned back for the door, "Well, if you don't want me to see you, that's fine. But...thank you for letting me look around. And...I'm sorry again. I'll go now." He began walking towards the door, but something caught his eye. In the shadows, barely lit by the fire, was a small table holding a jar. It looked oddly out of place, clean, and within it was the object that had captured Steve's attention.

It was a rose. As red as blood and far more precious. It seemed to float under the jar, its leaves gently swaying with an unseen air flow. With a sudden fervor Steve felt the need to touch this rose, to feel the silky smoothness of the petals, and to feel the cut of its thorns. It was in this disgraceful manner that he walked closer to the jar, his hand outstretched, reaching for it--when suddenly the sensation of being pulled back hit Steve.

His shirt caught around his throat and choked him as he hit the floor, pushed down by an assailant that clung to the shadows, the swish of a cape all that Steve caught before the attacker disappeared.

"What-Who are you?" Steve called out, scrambling to get back up.

"Thief," a voice growled out, low and rumbling and terrifying, "You come here, into my castle, uninvited, and try to steal my rose? I should kill you for this!"

Steve's jaw dropped. "Well that seems to be a gross exaggeration," he said before he could stop himself.

There was a pause before the voice spoke again, "What?"

Steve pulled himself to his feet and dusted off his pants, "Well, I didn't come in here with any intentions to steal anything for starters, I mean, I didn't know that this place belonged to anyone! And, also, I wasn't going to steal the rose, I just wanted...I wanted to..." To touch it, Steve thought, confused. I wanted to make it do something, though what, I don't know. He didn't say any of this however.

There was a snarl, "I don't believe you!"

Steve scoffed, "I don't really care if you do. Because I know that what I'm saying is true."

Before Steve could say another thing however a hand was thrown out from the shadows, reaching out to grip at Steve's shirt and yank him closer to the darkness. Steve choked in fear and then choked again when he saw that the hand, as well as the arm, was covered in tan fur, and that the fingers, so close to his throat, were tipped with claws.

“What--what--?” Steve couldn’t even finish the sentence, he didn’t know how.

He stared into the shadows before the owner of the voice stepped forward, and Steve gasped. It was a beast, a creature of the likes that he had never seen before.

The tan fur was everywhere, curling over a bare barrel chest, and leading up to a fine, short snout that was opened to reveal dripping fangs. The only thing that seemed remotely human about the beast was its eyes, blue and stormy with the emotions of man.

“I am the master of this castle,” the beast snarled, “And you have attempted to take what is mine. For this, you will stay here, forever, until the rose bleeds red.”

There seemed to be a spark in the air as he said it, like some sort of spell, or, worse, some sort of contract.

Steve felt a pressure in his chest, like his heart was being gripped. As he fought to right himself the beast turned and began to drag him along into the darkness, into places unseen, and worse, unknown.

The beast took Steve up and up until he was thrown into a dark cell, the smell of mold and mildew overwhelming as Steve felt his way along the cold stone floor.

“You can’t keep me here like this,” he shouted, overwhelmed.

The beast growled, “I can do as I please. And there’s nothing a little princess like you can do.”

Steve glared into the darkness and gritted his teeth, “Look,” he tried reasonably, “I’m sure we can come to some agreement. I know that it was wrong to come here, but I honestly have no idea why you’re so mad about some rose!”

The beast clanged the cell door shut, “It’s not some rose,” he snarled, “You wouldn’t understand, so don’t even try.”

Steve had had enough. He whirled around and threw his hands up, “Ugh! I am so tired of people telling me what to do! First, its Tommy, trying to make me marry him, and then threatening to make my life a living hell, then, its getting lost in the woods, which, talk about embarrassing, and now, there’s you, acting like a loon, locking me up over nothing!”

Silence reigned after he finished venting.

Then, “Someone tried to make you marry them? The fuck?” The beast

sounded completely mystified and disgusted, “Not even I would do that.”

Steve rolled his eyes and crossed his arms, “Well, thank god you’re not like that! No marriage here, only imprisonment for life.”

The beast huffed, “Well, I’m so sorry if you breaking into my home and then trying to touch my most valuable possession set me off. I’ve been having a rough time lately, in case you haven’t noticed.”

Steve snorted and slid down a wall to sit on the floor, “Oh, no, I thought that the scary ambiance of the castle was completely on purpose.”

They were both quiet for a moment before the beast spoke again, “You’re strange. What’s your name, intruder?” He said the last part playfully, so Steve let it slide.

“My name is Steve Harrington,” he told the creature.

“I see,” the beast rumbled. “Well, I’ll make a deal with you Steve. I will release you if you stay here, in this castle, with me until the end of my days.”

Steve spluttered, “What? That’s not much of a compromise! One form of prison for another!”

The beast sub vocalized, “I find you intriguing,” he said, “And you will not be in a prison. I can offer you some luxury. Not all of my domain is ‘scary.’”

Steve thought. If the beast let him out of this cell then perhaps he could escape back to the village. There he could at least say good bye to the Hendersons before he was forced to leave again.

“Alright,” he conceded, “I’ll stay.” But not for long, he added silently to himself.

“Then we have a deal,” the beast grumbled before he opened the door to the cell.

With a deep breath Steve got up and stepped out, the brush of the beast’s fur lingering against his arm and making him shiver.

He need only play babysitter to this creature for a little while before he left, hopefully to a better future.

Notes for the Chapter:

Not too happy with this chapter. I was having a hard time focusing on it. Hopefully the next one will be better. Sorry babes.

Author's Note:

Chapters will be posted a bit irregularly, so sorry in advance.

Please review, it gives me all sorts of thrills